



PUBLIC HEALTH BYTES

www.publichealthbytes.org

Henrico Health Department's Newsletter

Working in partnership
with the citizens of
Henrico County to create
the conditions for health.

April 2007
Volume 3
Issue 4

Communicable Diseases Update

Sexually Transmitted Infections: Gonorrhea- Fluoroquinolones No Longer Recommended for Treatment of Gonococcal Infections—Due to widespread fluoroquinolone resistance in gonorrhea among both heterosexuals and men who have sex with men (MSM), CDC is no longer recommending the use of fluoroquinolones in the treatment of gonorrhea in the United States. This change in recommendations essentially leaves us with only a single class of antibiotics, cephalosporins, to treat gonorrhea. We will all have to await additional research to guide future treatment recommendations related to gonorrhea treatment. See:

http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/mm5614a3.htm?s_cid=mm5614a3_e.

Syphilis - VDH reports that at the end of 2006, Virginia experienced a 31% increase in infectious syphilis compared to 2005. In addition, as of the first week in April, Virginia is experiencing a 39% increase in infectious syphilis compared to the same time period in 2006. VDH is initiating the following strategies: Rapid Outbreak Response, Enhanced Syphilis Surveillance, Increased Health Promotion, and Increased Community Involvement. **Hepatitis B** –Henrico Health Department (HHD) has recently seen an increase in positive test results for hepatitis B core antibody IgM (HBc IgM). HHD conducts follow up for IgM+ and HBsAg+ results to determine whether the case is acute or chronic, health education has been provided, and high risk contacts adequately protected. To expedite case management, HHD has implemented a standardized form/fax to collect data from health care providers. **MRSA**: CDC is conducting a study involving fatal or hospitalized cases of community-associated pneumonia caused by MRSA. Although the case definition for the study includes cases from Nov. 1, 2006-April 1, 2007, they are interested in hearing about all cases of severe or unusual community-onset MRSA. Please report cases to us at 804-501-4522. The link below is to a recent MMWR article describing cases in Louisiana and Georgia.

<http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/mm5614a1.htm>

Environmental Health

Arboviral Diseases: West Nile Virus (WNV) - The state lab will no longer test dead wild birds for WNV. Testing dead birds is not considered a useful or economic WNV surveillance indicator as there is little evidence of a correlation between reported dead bird data and WNV infection rates in mosquitoes. Despite not testing dead birds, the Henrico Standing Water Initiative encourages the public to call **226-NILE** (6453) for dead bird concerns. Staff will provide information about sound mosquito control practices.

Pandemic Flu/Avian Flu- ALERT PHASE: 3

Pandemic/Avian Flu Update: Human Cases - Avian Cases –The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) recently announced the first approval in the United States of a vaccine for humans against the H5N1 influenza virus. H5N1 influenza vaccine vaccination consists of two intramuscular injections, given approximately one month apart. The vaccine has been purchased by the federal government for inclusion within the U.S. Strategic National Stockpile for distribution by public health officials if needed.

Seasonal Influenza Corner

Virginia 2006/2007 flu Surveillance

Activity Level: **Local (as of 4/24/2007)**

<http://www.vdh.state.va.us/Epidemiology/Surveillance/Influenza/>

CDC flu surveillance at: <http://www.cdc.gov/flu/weekly/>

Prevention Updates

The Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ) has created new checklists to help men and women know which medical tests are needed to stay healthy at any age. The “Stay Healthy at Any Age” checklists can be found at:

<http://www.ahrq.gov/clinic/ppipix.htm#tools>

Emergency Preparedness

School Violence: Recent events at Virginia Tech have brought the issue of school violence close to home. If you are asked about resources on school violence, consider: <http://www.cdc.gov/Features/SchoolViolence/>
Save the Date: Henrico County Pandemic Influenza Summit - **Friday, Aug 3, 2007**. This event will be free and open to all government, healthcare, business, and community organizations in Henrico County. More info to follow. **Medical Reserve Corps (MRC):** Henrico MRC continues to recruit and train new members for disaster response. For more information please see: <http://www.co.henrico.va.us/health/mrc.html>

Prepared by Henrico Health District:

Mark J. Levine, MD, MPH
District Health Director
Michael K. Wagner, MPH
Emergency Planner

J. Rebecca Early, MPH
District Epidemiologist
Augustine Doe, MHSA
MRC/Pan Flu Coord.

Tel: (804) 501-4522 Fax: (804) 501-4232
Emergency Number: 1-866-531-3068
<http://www.vdh.state.va.us/LHD/henrico/>